ART BY PRONOUNCEDYOU ON DEVIANTART
pronouncedyou presents seafood
freshly caught!
AHOY!
don't eat us!
bon appetit?
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花とゆめCOMICS

夏目友人帳

緑川ゆき 17

LaLa HC

夏目友人帳〔17〕

緑川ゆき

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花とゆめCOMICS

(2014年1月刊)

▶収録作品◀

おつかいからの帰り道、幼なじみの女の子を探す不思議な少年・葵と出会った夏目。彼女の学校さえ知らず手がかりを求める葵を自分の学校まで案内することに。そこである秘密を知り…？名取と的場の過去がひも解かれる特別編も収録。あやかし契約奇談第17巻!!

■LaLa掲載■

白泉社

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第17巻

緑川ゆき

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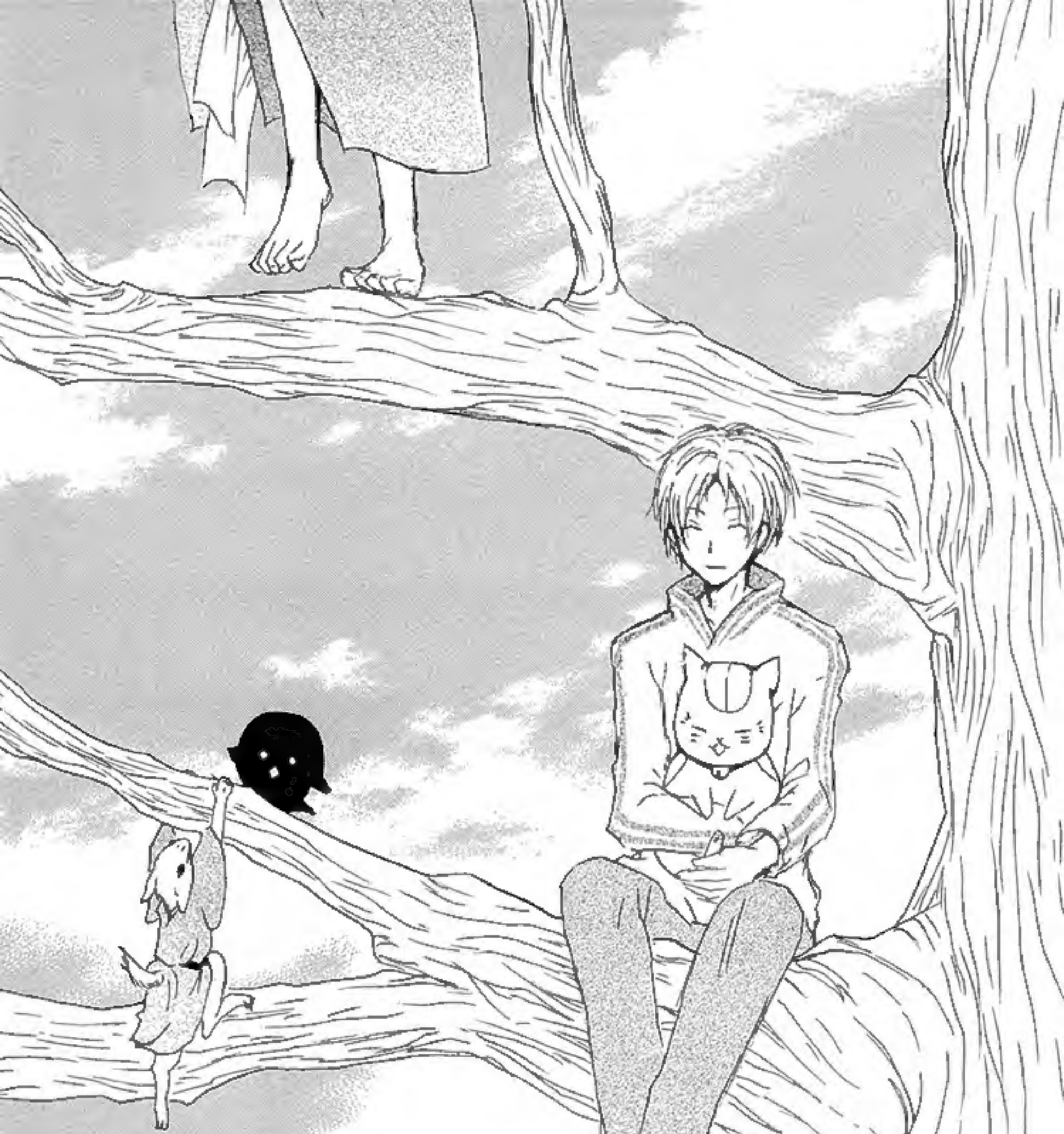
この作品はフィクションです。実在の人物・団体・事件などにはいっさい関係ありません。



夏目友人帳

なつめゆうじんちょう

第六十八話（だいろくじゅうはちわ）

Ever since I was young, I've been able to see strange things.

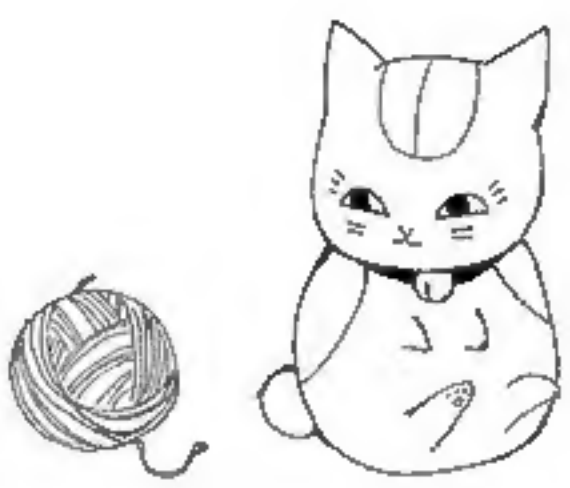
Things that others couldn't see... They're probably what people call "youkai".

PHEW! I DIDN'T MISS THE TRAIN BACK.

I HOPE I DIDN'T FORGET ANYTHING...

THAT TOUKO-SAN ASKED ME TO BUY.

CRUMPLE



An enve-lope...? Someone must have dropped it.

...

EXCUSE ME. IS THIS YOURS?

...

glance

...

Sigh

...

THAT'S MINE.

AH, YES.

GOOD THING YOU FOUND IT!

IF IT WASN'T FOR YOU, I'D HAVE LOST IT WITHOUT EVEN NOTICING.

EH...

YOWAKE.

YOWAKE...

I SWEAR I'VE SEEN THAT UNIFORM BEFORE, BUT IT'S NOT FROM AROUND HERE. WHAT SCHOOL DO YOU GO TO?

HM?

AH, THIS LETTER IS QUITE TROUBLE-SOME...

THANK YOU. IS THAT A LETTER?

ARE YOU WAITING FOR THE TRAIN AS WELL? DO YOU WANT TO SIT DOWN?

WHAT YEAR ARE YOU? FIRST YEAR?

UM...

...

HUH?

SOMEONE I KNOW MIGHT BE THERE.

WHAT DO YOU SAY? COULD YOU TAKE ME TO YOUR SCHOOL?

THAT MEANS YOU'RE A YEAR YOUNGER.

I HAVE A CHILDHOOD FRIEND...

I WANT TO MEET BUT I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT SCHOOL THEY GO TO.

COULD YOU TAKE ME THERE? ONCE WE ARRIVE, I CAN SEARCH ON MY OWN.

Rattle

Rattle

...

I went to a large shopping district that's a bit far away to buy a reference book and do some shopping for Touko-san.

And now, strangely, I have a companion for the trip back.

Rattle

Rattle

Rattle

Rattle

Stare

..WHAT?

NOTHING...

I WAS THINKING THAT YOU'RE REALLY KIND.

HUH?

...REALLY?

I'M AOI, AND YOU ARE...?

YOU'VE GOT SOME NERVE, FIRST-YEAR.

BUT THEN AGAIN, I'M THE ONE WHO'S IN YOUR DEBT HERE.

WHAT?! I DON'T TELL LIES!

YOU... ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE LOOKING FOR YOUR CHILD-HOOD FRIEND?! WHAT IF YOU'RE SOME KIND OF STALKER OR SOMETHING?

...

IS THAT A BAD THING?

NO, IT'S JUST THAT...

YOU'RE RATHER OBEDIENT.

...NATSUME.

Aoi-san is...

a slightly mysterious person.

Rattle

Rattle

Rattle

Rattle

...

MY CHILDHOOD FRIEND WAS VERY STUBBORN.

SO, WE'RE HERE...

YOU'RE FREE TO GO HOME THEN, NAT SUME.

ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE GOING TO BE FINE? IF YOU CAUSE ANY TROUBLE N THERE, I'LL PERSONALLY BEAT YOU JP

ANYWAY, YOU CAN RELAX I'M REALLY JUST HERE TO MEET MY FRIEND

I'M ACTUALLY PRETTY STRONG!

WHAT? NO WAY, NO WAY!

!

WHAT?! WITH THOSE MATCHST CK ARMS OF YOURS?!

...I'M SUCH AN IDIOT! WHAT AM I DOING HERE?

UGH...

HUH?

...

EVEN IF I DO MANAGE TO FIND MY FRIEND, IT'S BEEN SO LONG... WHAT'S THE POINT NOW?

WELL... ...

WHAT'S IT TO YOU?

IS YOUR CHILDHOOD FRIEND A GIRL?

HUH?!

HEY, NATSUME YOU HAVEN'T GONE HOME YET? WHAT ARE YOU DOING THERE BY YOURSELF?

.....

NOTHING

THAT'S ENOUGH!

YOU JUST FIGURED IT OUT NOW? YOU'RE KINDA SLOW...

Huh? What happened Natsume?

He's an ayakashi...

Nishimura can't see him..!

...

I'm slowly accepting the fact that I can see things

But...

It's still unnerving when I can't tell the difference between humans and ayakashi.

Central Park

EXPLAIN YOURSELF!

I'M SORRY, BUT I HAVEN'T TOLD YOU A SINGLE LIE

Hm.

What's an ayakashi doing dressed in a suit?

IT'S UP TO ME HOW I WANNA DRESS, RIGHT?

I SEE...

SORRY ABOUT THAT

...

IT WOULD'VE BEEN NICE IF YOU HAD MENTIONED EARLIER THAT YOU WERE AN AYAKASHI...

IT TROUBLES ME THAT I DIDN'T FIND OUT UNTIL LATER.

And...

From my experience,

these ayakashi that seem so human..

tend to have a human that they want to be with..

I DON'T THINK SO... I DON'T KNOW MANY SECOND-YEARS.

SONOKAWA KAORU. IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN, SHE'S A SECOND-YEAR STUDENT. HAVE YOU HEARD OF HER?

WHAT'S THE NAME OF THE GIRL YOU'RE LOOKING FOR?

IF SOMEONE LIKE YOU WAS IN THE SAME SCHOOL AS HER,

BOTH OF YOU DEFINITELY WOULD'VE MET

HUH?

...

stare

NOTHING... JUDGING FROM YOUR REACTION, I DOUBT SHE'S IN THIS SCHOOL

WHA... WHAT IS IT?

KAORU CAN SEE... AYAKASHI TOO.

!

EVEN SO, SHE ISN'T AS STRONG AS YOU. SHE'S AT A LEVEL WHERE SHE CAN ONLY SEE AYAKASHI WHOSE WAVELENGTH IS CLOSE TO HERS.

WELL, I'M NOT SURE IF IT'S BECAUSE WE WERE VERY COMPATIBLE BUT ONE THING WAS FOR SURE: SHE COULD SEE ME VERY CLEARLY BUT.

DUE TO SOME CIRCUMSTANCES, WE HAD TO CUT TIES.

YOU'VE REALLY HELPED ME BY REACHING OUT TO ME, NATSUME

...

THAT'S... IT WAS A REALLY SILLY REASON.

...

WELL, AS I PROMISED, I'LL SEARCH FOR HER ON MY OWN AND LEAVE AFTER THAT

UM...

CIRCUMSTANCES? WHAT SORT?

I ALMOST WENT TO SEE HER.

...I GOT ALL WORKED UP BECAUSE I LOOKED AT THAT LETTER

...THAT'S RIGHT

ALL SORTS OF MEMORIES.

IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I'VE TALKED TO A HUMAN. IT BRINGS BACK MEMORIES.

WE CUT TIES

THAT'S RIGHT

Mmm.

I GUESS I'LL GO HOME THEN.

IT'S NOT LIKE IT'S YOUR FAULT OR ANYTHING IT WAS SILLY OF ME TO COME ALL THE WAY HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE.

WHAT?! WAIT A MINUTE!

THIS JUST MAKES IT LOOK LIKE I STOPPED YOU FROM SEEING HER!

Uh. What about the letter?

You said something about a letter. What was written in it?

...

WELL...

RUSTLE

HEY, NATSUME! THE NEW SWEETS AT NANATSUJIYA HAVE WHITE BEAN PASTE INSIDE

THIS CONTAINS-

HUH?

...THIS ISN'T REALLY A LETTER.

*TL/N: A JAPANESE RACCOON DOG.

WAIT... THAT TANUK IS WHITE...

...SENSEI?!

NYANKO-SENSEI!

WHOA! A HUGE TANUKI*!

MU? WHO'S THIS CROW-LIKE KID?

NATSUME, DO YOU KNOW IT?

EH... WELL, YEAH...

A WHITE TANUKI IS HIGHLY VIRTUOUS. IT'S EVEN SAID THAT ITS EXISTENCE IS CLOSE TO A GOD... OR, AT LEAST, THAT'S WHAT MY BROTHERS HAVE TOLD ME.

Eh..

AND YOU'RE ACQUAINTANCES?! WHO ARE YOU REALLY?!

CALM DOWN, AOI-SAN! TAKE A BETTER LOOK AT THIS CREATURE!

WEL...

I... I'M STILL TRAINING AT KAGOMEDAKE TO BE ABLE TO PROTECT THE FOREST

MU... THIS FEELING... YOU MUST BE PRETTY STRONG.

THANK YOU, BUT I WILL HAVE TO POLITELY DECLINE AS I'M STILL YOUNG AND UNWORTHY OF SUCH AN OFFER

And tell me more about this spring

I LIKE YOU! YOU'RE WELCOME TO HAVE TEA AT OUR PLACE

KAGOMEDAKE? ISN'T THAT THE PLACE THAT'S SAID TO HAVE THE REALLY DELICIOUS SAKE SPRING?

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

SENSE...

HEY.

Huh?

HM...

THE SPRING IS UNDER THE PROTCTION OF MY TEACHER, DOUTAKA-SAMA, AND HIS DISCIPLES.

Huh?

I HAPPENED TO SEE ONE OF DOUTAKA'S KIDS BY CHANCE AND FOLLOWED HIM.

FLAP

FLAP

IT'S A GOOD THING I DID! WHAT AN OPPORTUNITY. I HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR IF YOU'RE NOT WITH THE REST.

A bird spirit?!

DO LET ME TAKE MY REVENGE.

SWOOSH

!

STAY BACK, NATSUME

BUZZ
SWOOSH
SWOOSH

WHOA! WAS THAT THE WHITE TANUKI-SAMA'S TRUE FORM?!

POOF

THUD

Hey!

WHITE TANUKI-SAMA, MAY I KNOW YOUR NAME?

YOU SURE ARE A BUSY ONE, AOI. BUT THEN AGAIN, IT MUST BE EASY TO HAVE GRUDGES BORNE AGAINST YOU WHEN YOU'RE A FOREST GUARDIAN.

FLEES

EEEEEK!

HMPH.

AOI-SAN... IT'S A CAT!

HUH?

CALL ME NYANKO-SENSEI.

IT'S RARE FOR SENSEI TO TAKE A L KING TO SOMEONE WHY DON'T YOU COME OVER?

Sigh

SENSEI...

NATSUME, WE'RE HEADING HOME YOU COME TOO, AOI

OKAY, BUT...

...

I DID BRING YOU TO MY SCHOOL. YOU COULD AT LEAST TELL ME YOUR STORY

WE WERE IN THE MIDDLE OF OUR TALK AS WELL

BUT IT'S UNAVOIDABLE, I GUESS.

IT'S A HUMILIATING STORY,

KAKEI-WAYAMA...

IT'S A DISTANT MOUNTAIN IN THE NEXT CITY

I'M LIVING IN KAGOMEDAKE RIGHT NOW, BUT I'M ORIGINALLY FROM KAKEI-WAYAMA

I MET KAORU WHEN WE WERE BOTH YOUNG

I LIVED IN THE FOREST WHILE KAORU LIVED IN THE CITY,

BUT THAT TOM-BOYISH HUMAN WOULD OFTEN WANDER INTO THE FOREST

SHE TEASED ME WHEN WE FIRST MET, BUT SHE DIDN'T KNOW I WAS AN AYAKASHI AT THAT POINT

SOON ENOUGH,

SHE REALIZED THE TRUTH SINCE I WASN'T VERY GOOD AT ACTING LIKE A HUMAN.

BUT...

I see! Aoi-chan is what they call "youkai", right?

Here I'm lucky then.

SHE CONTINUED TO VISIT THE FOREST AFTER THAT

SHE'D TELL ME LOTS OF THINGS ABOUT THE HUMAN WORLD

Aoi-san's knowledge of humans and his cheerful way of talking must be all from Kaoru

KAORU SOON GREW UP AND ENTERED JUNIOR HIGH, BUT MY GROWTH WASN'T SIMILAR TO THAT OF HUMANS.

AROUND THAT TIME I DEVELOPED A CUR OSITY ABOUT THE HUMAN WORLD

I'm really lucky to be able to see youkai!

AND THEN I REAL ZED...

I WANTED TO SEE THE PLACE THAT SHE LIVED IN.

ALL THESE THINGS MADE HER SEEM WE RD TO THE REST OF THE HUMANS

EVEN THOUGH SHE WAS ALREADY N JUNIOR HIGH, SHE STILL PLAYED IN THE FOREST,

AND THE FACT THAT SHE'D RATHER COME TO THE FOREST THAN HANG OUT W TH HER SCHOOL FRIENDS...

...

..RIGHT?

KAORU BECAME A SECOND-YEAR.

WHILE I WAS THINKING THAT I'D TELL HER THE NEXT TIME,

I KNEW THAT WE COULDN'T BE TOGETHER,

BUT I COULDN'T BRING MYSELF TO SAY IT... SO...

AND JUST AS IT SEEMED LIKE SHE WAS BEGINNING TO DEVELOP FEELINGS FOR ME...

!

YOU RAN AWAY, RIGHT?

I'M ASHAMED TO ADMIT THAT THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I DID

SOON ENOUGH, I THEN REACHED MY PEAK GROWTH JUST LIKE HOW A TREE'S GROWTH BECOMES A LOT SLOWER ONCE IT REACHES ITS MAXIMUM HEIGHT, MY GROWTH, TOO, SLOWED DOWN.

MY APPEARANCE WON'T CHANGE MUCH FROM NOW ON... AND SO, OUR PATHS DIVERTED

IT MEANT THAT IT WASN'T POSSIBLE FOR US TO LIVE OUT OUR LIVES TOGETHER.

IF SHE'S WITH AN AYAKASHI, SHE WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO HAVE A HUMAN LOVER,

MEANING SHE WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO START A FAMILY

SO I MADE UP MY MIND

I CUT TIES WITH HER AND HID IN THE MOUNTAINS. THEN I BECAME DOUTAKA-SAMA'S DISCIPLE AND STARTED MY TRAINING

I'M ACTUALLY ONE OF THE STRONGER AYAKASHI, SO EVEN MY ELDER BROTHERS EXPECT GREAT THINGS FROM ME.

I'M CURRENTLY TRAINING TO WARD OFF EVIL SPIRITS SO I'M GAINING ENEMIES LIKE THE ONE BEFORE

EVEN SO, I ENJOY DOING WHAT I DO

...I SEE.

Even though he's saying things like that...

I'VE BEEN SO FOCUSED ON MY TRAINING LATELY THAT I'D ALMOST FORGOTTEN ABOUT KAORU.

...

He's devoting himself to his training in order to forget about Kaori

It seems like he's implying that...

Aoi-san seemed a bit relieved that we didn't have to talk about the envelope

Sensei then butted in with drinks and food, thus ending our conversation

GASP

!
SIT UP
From this afternoon

LOOK, IT'S BUNTAN'S COCKY STUDENT.

SNORE

SNORE

AOI-SAN!

HOW ANNOY-ING...

SO ANNOY-ING...

GLARE

THEY'RE WEAK THEY CAN'T DO MUCH,

BUT THEY'RE STILL BOTHER-SOME

THEY RAN AWAY

BEEEK!

WHOOSH

WHOOSH

SORRY ABOUT THAT, NATSUME IT SEEMS LIKE I BROUGHT SOME WE RD GUYS ALONG WITH ME

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR HELP

I STILL WANT TO HEAR

Someone who understands what it's like to

I WANT TO MEET HER.

IT'S NOT FOR YOUR SAKE.

Someone whose heart

[illegible]

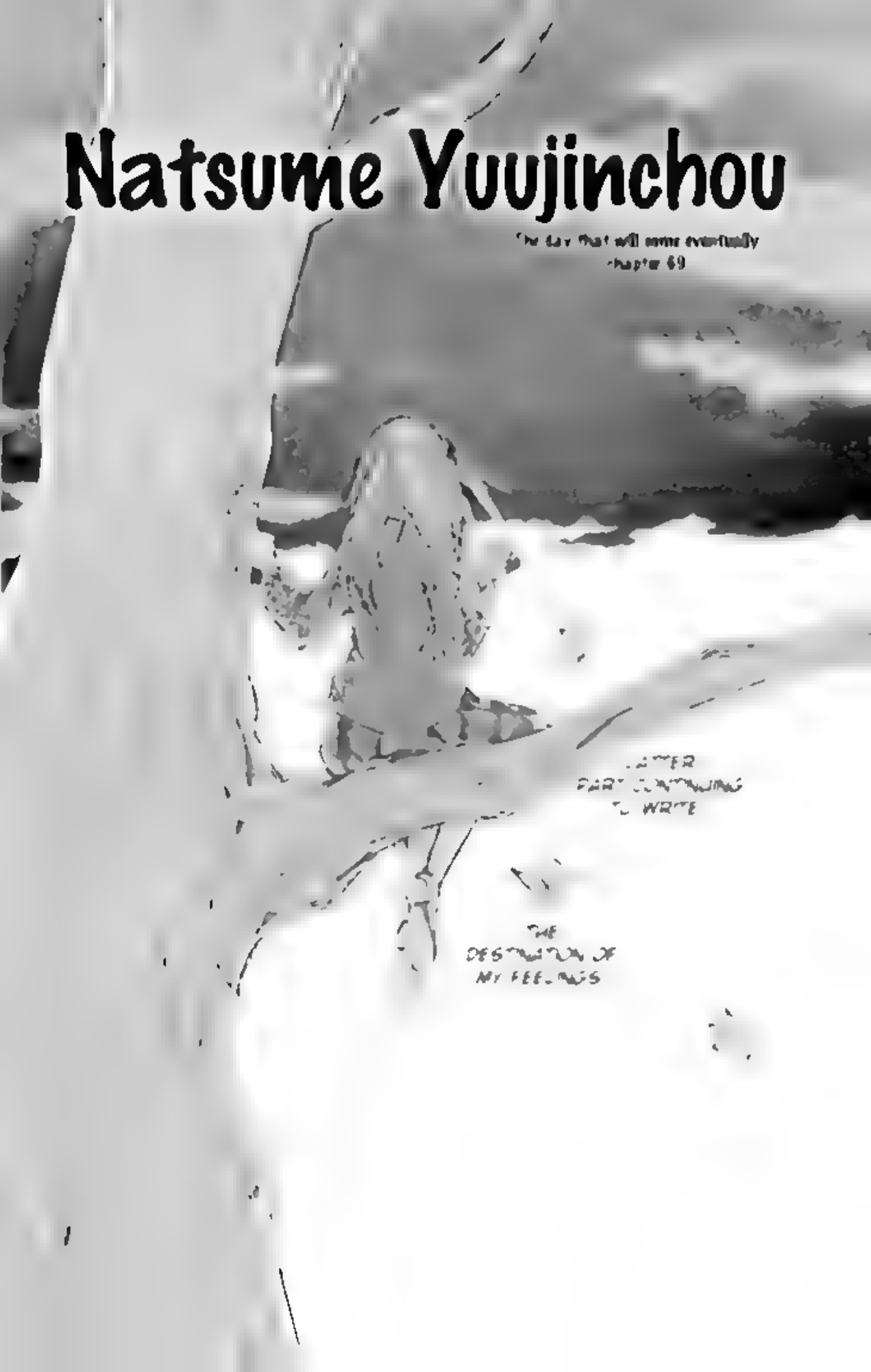
[illegible]

.....

RUSTLE

Natsume Yuujinchou

The day that will come eventually
chapter 69



I WAS RAISED IN A FLOCK, BUT I HURT MY WING
WHEN I REALIZED IT, THE FLOCK WAS GONE AND I WAS ALL ALONE.
NATSUME, I AM...
TO PUT IT SIMPLY, I AM A BIRD-LIKE AYAKASHI.
SIGH
LIVING ALONE WITHOUT BEING ABLE TO SEE MY FRIENDS MADE ME, WITH THIS UN-SIGHTLY WING, SOMEWHAT RELIEVED.
I WAS LONELY, BUT...
DONT MAKE SUCH A FACE. IT IS HOW IT IS.
.....

IT WAS AT THAT TIME THAT I MET KAORU.
HEY, AOI.
HM...?
YOU LOST THE ENVELOPE AGAIN. SHOW ME WHAT'S INSIDE.
EH, AH...
PASTLE
BA
CONGRAT-ULATIONS?!
WHAM
WHAT?!

A W-WEDDING INVITATION?! ...IN FIVE DAYS ...KAORU-SAN WILL MARRY...?
...AND WHERE DID YOU GET THIS LETTER FROM...?
THE MAIL BOX OF A DESERTED HOUSE.
WHEN WE COULDN'T MEET, KAORU WOULD OFTEN PUT LETTERS FOR ME INTO IT.
I AM CURRENTLY TRAINING AT DOUTAKA-SAMA'S SIDE AND HAVE SETTLED THERE TOO.
I STOPPED THERE ON A WHIM AND TOOK A LOOK INSIDE
This girl
THE MAIL BOX WAS FILLED WITH LETTERS FROM KAORU, BUT UP UNTIL NOW I HADN'T READ ANY OF THEM.
LET'S JUST PRETEND I DIDN'T SEE THEM.
BUT THE NEW LOOKING LETTER ON TOP, STRANGELY BOTHERED ME
AND I OPENED IT.

...SAY, AOI-SAN,
IS SHE REALLY A SECOND A SECOND YEAR IN HIGH SCHOOL? HARDLY NO ONE MARRIES AT SUCH A YOUNG AGE..
WHAT?! THERE IS NO WAY I WOULD CALCULATE IT WRONG...
.....
.AH, UHM... THERE IS NO WAY IT'D BE ...
JUSTICE
DID YOU READ. THE POSTSCRIPT TOO?
I DIDN'T CARE.
.AOI-SAN, CAN YOU READ HUMAN WRITING?
WELL, HER...
...I SEE.
AOI-CHAN,
HOW ARE YOU?
AO.-CHAN
AOI-CHAN

I AM FINE NOW

I MET A PERSON WHO CARES ABOUT ME VERY MUCH

THAT IS WHY I WON'T WAIT FOR AOI-CHAN ANY LONGER

BE AT EASE

THE LAST ONE, AOI-CHAN

THIS WILL BE MY LAST LETTER, TOO

I'VE ALSO INCLUDED AN INVITATION IN IT,

SO AT LEAST SHOW YOUR FACE, PLEASE

IF YOU REALLY WANT TO FORGET ABOUT ME, THEN

COME AND SAY YOUR CONGRATULATIONS

YOU CAN LAUGH.
I CAME NOT FOR KAORU'S BUT FOR MY SAKE.
TO GIVE MY BLESSING WITHOUT FAIL,
AND TO FORGET ABOUT HER WITHOUT FAIL THIS TIME AS WELL.
THIS IS THE LAST TIME.

KAORU-SAN IS ALREADY.

SHE SURELY DIDN'T KNOW THAT

THE AOI-SAN WHO RAN AWAY HAS

SURELY,
DEVOTED HIMSELF TO STUDYING TO FORGET ABOUT HER
AND HAS KEPT TRACK OF THE TIME HE HAS LEFT WITH HER
IF SHE KNEW SHE WOULD ONLY BE SAD..
KAORU-SAN'S FIGURE AND HIS RESOLUTION
Sigh
EH? YOU'RE SEARCHING FOR SOMEONE? SONOKAWA KAORU..?
HMM.
WELL MAYBE HE WANTS TO CONFIRM IT
THE INVITATION ONLY HAD THE ADDRESS OF THE PLACE OF CEREMONY
HE'LL KNOW IT IF HE GOES THERE AND ASKS..
IF AOI-SAN WOULD JUST GO TO THE CEREMONY, HE COULD MEET HER WITHOUT SEARCHING FOR HER...
BEFORE THE CEREMONY

TO BE HONEST,
EH?! WHAT'S THIS ABOUT?!
NISHI-MURA!!! IS THIS PERSON GETTING MARRIED?!
Spits out
AH!
THERE'S SOMEONE WITH THAT NAME AT MY CRAM SCHOOL.
IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN, SHE'S A YEAR ABOVE US AND AT ANOTHER SCHOOL, SO I HAVEN'T TALKED TO HER.
ONE YEAR ABOVE?!
She's a second year?!
I KNEW IT MUST BE THE WRONG PERSON BUT I ASKED NISHIMURA.
Let's go home
Meow
Meow
TO TAKE ME TO THIS CRAM SCHOOL THE NEXT DAY ANYWAY
WHAT? HOUSE-SITTING?
AHH, I'D LIKE YOU TO MAKE SURE NO WEIRD AYAKASH ARE GETTING INTO THE HOUSE.
BYE, I'M OFF.
UNTIL I CONFIRM IT, AO SAN HAS TO...
EH?! IT'S ENOUGH TO JUST CHASE THEM AWAY!!!
WHAT SHOULD I DO? SHOULD I HANG THEM WHEN I CATCH THEM?
I DON'T MIND, BUT...

WHOOSH
RUSTLE
WHOOSH
.....
SWOOSH
Nishimura! Thank you, you've helped me a lot
LOOK Natsume. It's the girl resting on the bench
SHE'S A NORMAL HIGH SCHOOL GIRL!!! SHE DOESN'T LOOK LIKE SHE'S GETTING MARRIED IN THREE DAYS!!!
She's definitely the kuroi is person
LUM, EXCUSE ME.
DO YOU KNOW A BOY CALLED AOI?
MY NAME IS NATSUME... LUM,
YES?

shock
.....
!!!?
YOU, LET'S TALK IN PRIVATE!!!
GRAB
WAAAH?!
come here

Shock
NO WAY...IS AOI-CHAN ALREADY HERE?!
TH-THIS IS BAD, I HAVE TO HIDE!
Looks around
EH?!
Looks around
DID YOU MEET AOI-CHAN SOME-WHERE?!
CAN YOU SEE AYAKASHI BY ANY CHANCE?!
WELL, YOU SEE...
NO... AOI-SAN DIDN'T COME HERE.
I KEPT IT A SECRET AND JUST CAME TO CONFIRM.
R... REALLY.. ?
AOI-CHAN.. REALLY IS...
.....
DID YOU PUT THE WEDDING INVITATION INTO THE MAIL BOX?
YEAH...
UM.. THEN, DID AOI-CHAN READ IT?
YEAH.
Clench
I SEE .
I SEE .

FUFU
IT WAS A TRAP
THE INVITATION
BUT
YES!
I GOT HIM!!!
IN ORDER TO MEET AO-CHAN ONE MORE TIME
NO IN ORDER TO CATCH HIM
I SET UP A TRAP

THE FIRST TIME I MET AOI-CHAN WAS WHEN I WAS LITTLE.
I MET A WEIRD BOY IN MY FAVORITE FOREST
I MUSTERED UP ALL MY COURAGE AND TALKED TO HIM.
YOU'RE ALWAYS ON TOP OF A TREE, DO YOU LIVE AROUND HERE?
WON'T YOU COME DOWN AND PLAY WITH ME? I BROUGHT SOME CANDY, LET'S SHARE IT.
CANDY?
I DON'T NEED IT
THERE ARE SNAKES AND DOGS ON THE GROUND, SO THE OTHERS SAID TO NEVER GO DOWN.
YES, IT'S SWEET.
THE OTHERS? WHO ARE THE OTHERS?
AREN'T YOU ALWAYS ALONE?
SINCE THEN,
NO MATTER HOW MUCH I SPOKE TO HIM, HE WOULDN'T REPLY

FLAP
TAP TAP
STOPS
SHAKES
EH?
WINGS? IS HE PART OF A THEATER OR
DOES HE INTEND
!
SHOCK
RUSTLE
...WHA...
THERE'S NO WAY YOU COULD FLY WITH THOSE TOY WINGS!
...WHAT ...YOU AGAIN...?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, COME DOWN!
STOP, STOP, THAT'S DANGEROUS!

POW
POW
POW
POW
TURN
DON'T INSULT ME, STUPID WOMAN!
THAT'S JUST FINE! LET'S DUEL!!!
WHA... I WAS WORRIED!
YOU RASCAL, BRING IT ON!
WHAT'S WITH THIS LEAVE IT
AOX
I'M SORRY DOES IT HURT? I'M SO SORRY
THIS IS BAD THIS IS BAD WHAT SHOULD I DO?
HUG
I'LL CALL THEM I
SAY WHERE ARE THE OTHERS?!

YOU'RE SO GENTLE..
...EVERY TIME..
YOU JUST COULD HAVE IGNORED SOMEONE LIKE ME
..SOR-RY
THE OTHERS SAID THAT
WOUNDS WILL HEAL EVENTUALLY
DON'T CRY THESE ARE FINE
WHERE DID YOU GO FOR TWO WEEKS AGAIN?
OH BOY! I WANTED TO WATCH THE FIREWORKS TOGETHER WITH YOU...!!!
HM? TO THE NEIGHBORING MOUNTAIN. WHAT DID YOU WANT SOMETHING?
SAY, AO-CHAN
WE BEGAN TO PLAY TOGETHER.
HE LISTENED TO MANY OF MY STORIES...
...AND HE STOPPED TALKING ABOUT THE OTHERS...

I'M NOT THE GUY YOU SHOULD TELL THIS.
AHH, THIS, I SAW A FLICKERING FROM THE NEIGHBORING MOUNTAIN.
KAORU
WHAT!
I ALSO PUT A NOTE IN THE MAIL BOX! IT'S TROUBLESOME IF I CAN'T CONTACT YOU AT CRUCIAL TIMES!
WHAT'S THAT! I'M GETTING ANGRY! HAVE YOU BEEN WANDERING OFF SOMEWHERE ALONE, LATELY?
AND FOR ME THERE HAS TO BE A WAY I SHOULD WALK, TOO
FOR YOU THERE IS A PLACE WHERE YOU SHOULD LIVE.
EH?
DID AOI-CHAN COME TO HATE ME? IF THAT'S THE CASE THEN I CAN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT!
WHAT ARE YOU SUGGESTING. ?
I ALWAYS WANT TO BE WITH AOI-CHAN! BECAUSE...
...AOI-CHAN TOO, YOU KNOW ALREADY, RIGHT?
AOI-CHAN...
KAORU, THIS IS ALREADY-
YOU KNOW ALREADY

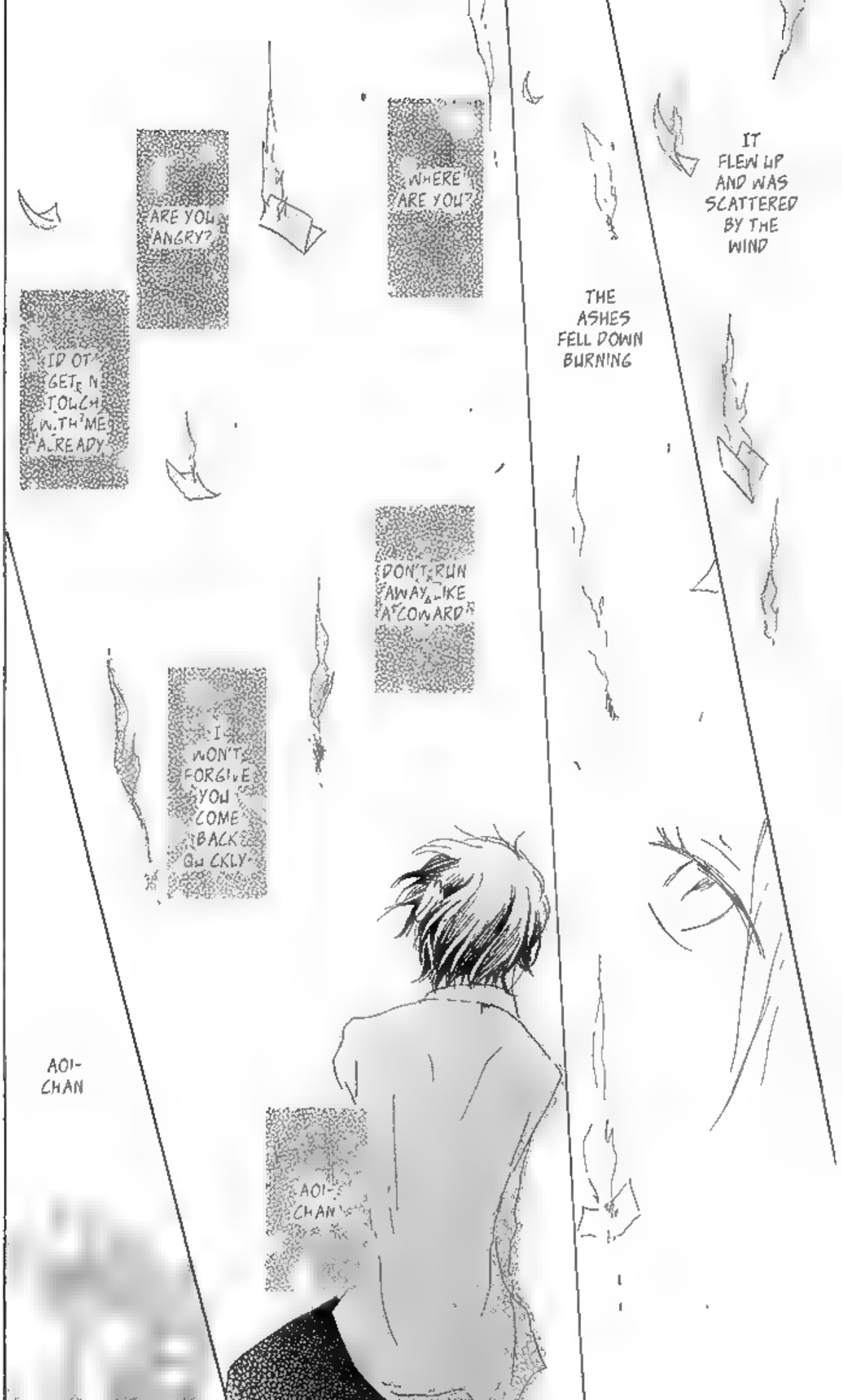
WHOOSH
I'VE ALWAYS...
...I'VE ALWAYS LOVED YOU.
I FOUND THE COURAGE TO TELL HIM THAT
SINCE THEN...
SINCE THAT DAY HE'S BEEN GONE.
HE DIS-APPEARED WITHOUT SAYING ANY-THING.
ISN'T THAT JUST TOO CRUEL?
LATER I CAME TO KNOW THAT YOU CAN'T SEE THE FIRE-WORKS FROM THE NEIGHBORING MOUNTAIN.
EH?
PERHAPS AOI-CHAN.
HAD ACTUALLY GONE TO A DIFFERENT PLACE THAT TIME...

PERHAPS...
HE CAME TO MY CITY...TO SEE THE FIREWORKS... OR SO I THOUGHT...
...NATSUME-KUN.
I WANT TO MEET AOI-CHAN ONCE MORE.
PLEASE, STAY SILENT ABOUT THE FACT THAT THE INVITATION IS A TRAP.
HE NEVER READ THE LETTERS I PUT IN IT...BUT IF HE GETS THIS IN HIS HANDS...
THIS MIGHT BE MY LAST SHOT.
THE LAST CHANCE TO LURE HIM OUT...!
TO WEAR HIM DOWN, TO PERSUADE HIM...
IF I MEET HIM ONE MORE TIME...IF HE STILL FEELS SOMETHING FOR ME...
TO CATCH HIM.

I WON'T LET HIM LEAVE AGAIN.
I'VE SEEN LOTS OF AYAKASH THAT ARE ATTRACTED TO HUMANS... BUT EVERYONE HAS LEFT, SENSEI.
.. A FRIGHTENING GIRL.
FUFU, KAORU-SAN IS PRETTY AWESOME...
YOU SEE, SENSEI, I
WHO KNOWS.
WILL KAORU-SAN'S PLAN WORK OUT, SENSEI?

I THINK IT WOULD BE GOOD, IF IT WORKED OUT WELL
MY BIG BROTHERS CAME.
...EH?
I'M BACK. HOW WAS IT? ANYTHING WEIRD?
THEY WERE WORRIED AND CAME TO LOOK FOR ME. AFTER I TOLD THEM THE REASON, THEY SAID I SHOULD FINISH MY BUSINESS PROPERLY AND COME BACK HOME...AND THAT THEY'D BE WAITING FOR ME
Innocent
NATSUME, WOULD YOU ACCOMPANY ME A LITTLE?
SWOOSH

KA-THUNK
FLAP
FLAP
I DIDN'T COME HERE ANYMORE
I DIDN'T REPLY AND I COULDN'T LOOK OVER THEM.
BUT I CAN'T JUST LEAVE THEM HERE.
IGNITE


IT FLEW UP AND WAS SCATTERED BY THE WIND
THE ASHES FELL DOWN BURNING
WHERE ARE YOU?
ARE YOU ANGRY?
IDIOT GET IN TOUCH WITH ME ALREADY
DON'T RUN AWAY LIKE A COWARD
I WON'T FORGIVE YOU COME BACK QUICKLY
AOI-CHAN
AOI-CHAN

I WANT TO BE WITH YOU

SURE
IT HAS TO BE AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE
YOU'LL RUN INTO A LITTLE BUILDING ON THE RIGHT, THAT'S THE PLACE OF THE CEREMONY
SAY, YOU... AREN'T HIDING SOMETHING, ARE YOU...?
EH?
HEY, IS IT CROOKED?
NO, YOU LOOK HANDSOME
TIGHTEN
12
.....
WHAT?
IF YOU WANT TO SAY SOMETHING, SAY IT.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, I DON'T GET IT...
I THOUGHT IT WAS A GOOD THING THAT AOI-SAN WAS BEING FRANK.
..BUT I REALLY AM INDEBTED TO YOU.
I REALLY DID REGRET IT, BUT I THINK IT'S NOT ONLY BECAUSE I HURT KAORU.
BUT IF SHE REALLY MET A GENTLE PARTNER,
IF I SEE HER HAPPY SMILE,
I'M SURE I CAN MOVE ON.
OOH, THERE IT IS.
FLAP

FLAP
FLAP
!
FLAP
TRANSFORM
STEP BACK, NATSUME
AT A TIME LIKE THIS!
YOU IMPERTINENT YOUNGEST BROTHER OF DOUTAKA, YOU DID US GOOD LAST TIME.
HUMPH, YOU'RE THE ONE WHO NEEDS TO STEP BACK, AOI.
EH...
RIGHT, RIGHT, PREPARE YOURSELF!

KYAH!
KYAH!
FLA
SH
MASTER NYANKO!
SENSEI!
CHE, THE LIGHT DOESN'T REALLY WORK AGAINST THESE BIRDS.
KYAH!
FLAP
KYAH!
KYAH!
FLAP
HOW ANNOYING
WHOOSH
SWIFT
NATSUMI
!

RUS
TLE
SHAKY
NATSUME HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS
AO-SAN
YOU SHALL PAY
SHOCK
NAT-SUME!
WHACK
KYAH!
WE'LL HANDLE THIS SOME-HOW AO-SAN BET GOING!

IF YOU WON'T COME BACK AGAIN, THEN AT LEAST GIVE HER A PROPER PARTING.
IF YOU REALLY COULDN'T FORGET ABOUT HER,
THEN YOU SHOULD TELL HER.
IF YOU GO,
IF YOU MEET HER,
I'M SURE...
YOU'LL DISCOVER YOUR TRUE FEELINGS
AO-CHAN

IS IT... HERE...?
...
PANT
PANT
PANT
SILENCE
.....
IS IT THE WRONG PLACE...?
NO ONE IS...
RUSTLE

SQUEEZE

LET GO.
I AM...
I WON'T LET GO!
LET GO.
LET GO, IDIOTIC WOMAN.
I'D NEVER!
NOT A SECOND TIME.
DON'T RUN ANY-MORE. LET'S TALK.
I WANT AOI-CHAN EVEN THOUGH HE'S AN AYA-KASHI.
AOI-CHAN.
AOI-CHAN.

AOI-CHAN.
BE BY MY SIDE.

LATER FOR SURE
I'LL MAKE YOU CRY EVEN MORE
THAT'S NOT TRUE
I SURELY WILL ENDURE IT

YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, KAORU.
THAT'S WHY I DON'T WANT IT
THAT'S WHY .
SWOOSH

AOI-SAN REMAINED BY KAORU-SAN'S SIDE

YEAH...
YOU CAN LAUGH. I'M A GUY THAT COU..DN'T COMMIT HIMSELF TO WHAT HE WANTED TO DO.
AFTER THIS I HAVE TO GO TO GIVE MY GREETINGS TO DOUTAKA-SAMA AND THE OTHERS ONCE.
I SEE .. WILL YOU BE OKAY?

YOUR HOME ISN'T THAT NEAR, BUT IF YOU'RE EVER WORRIED ABOUT SOMETHING, YOU CAN COME OVER TO TALK.
...I'M SORRY FOR AOI-SAN, BUT I'M SOMEWHAT HAPPY.
AH, THAT'S OKAY.
THANK YOU. SORRY AOI-SAN, I REA..LY...ABOUT THE INVITATION..

T/N: RICE BALL COATED WITH SWEETENED RED BEANS
THIS IS A THANK YOU FROM KAORU.
...SORRY.
OOH, THAT'S A SPECIAL FROM NANATSUJIYA, AN *O-HAGI PARCEL!!!
FUFU, REMEMBERING THE FLAVOR OF MAN-MADE THINGS IS A PAIN, RIGHT?!
MASTER NYANKO TOO...THANK YOU FOR YOUR TROUBLE.
YOU SHOULD SPEND YOUR DAYS DOING WHAT YOU WANT.
I ENJOYED KILLING TIME WITH THIS STRANGE YET INTERESTING CASE.
IDIOT. WHAT'S WITH THIS SENTIMENT? YOU'RE STILL A CHILD.
IF YOU END UP MEETING THEM, THAT IS.
SWOOSH
WHEN AOI-SAN SAID T,
YES.

I SUDDENLY WONDERED WHAT THIS THING THAT MAKES HER CRY COULD BE
SOME-TIMES, I TOO
MORE THAN BEING AFRAID OF PARTINGS
WILL I BECOME TO BE ABLE TO REMEMBER THE TIME WE SPEND TO-GETHER?
FLAP
SEE YOU.
SOMEDAY
YEAH, SEE YOU.

Credits

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Proofreader: Sorauya

Cleaner: DuchessOfFantasy

Typesetter: DuchessOfFantasy

QCer: `Roze`

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HUH? SENSEI, ARE YOU GOING SOMEWHERE? YOU'RE PACKING UP YOUR FAVORITE SAKE CUP.
HM? YEAH. A PARTY IS BEING HELD TONIGHT, SO I'M PREPARING TO LEAVE.
OH RIGHT, YOU WANT TO COME TOO?
IT'S RARE FOR YOU TO NVITE ME TO A PARTY.
IT'S A LITTLE DIFFERENT FROM THE NORMAL ONES.
WELL, IF YOU'RE NOT INTERESTED, THEN BE A GOOD KID AND TAKE CARE OF THE HOUSE
HMM...
IT'S NOT THAT I'M UN.NTER-ESTED

WHAT MAKES THIS SPECIAL PARTY SO DIFFERENT?
DAZE
Ding dong
Dang dong
I'LL PASS.
JUST THAT I CAN'T DR.NK AND IT'S AN AYAKASH PARTY I WOULDN'T WANT TO BE MADE NTO A SNACK EITHER
....
WHAT A SPINELESS CHAP YOU ARE. AHH, I CAN'T WAIT~
WH-WHAT S IT, NAT-SUME?
DAMMIT, I WANT TO KNOW!
SHOCK
RATTLE
Ah, sorry.
Come on!
Are you ready?
raaaay!
Cheers
Ohohoho
Ohohoho
Cheers
...
SENSE!
WALKING
IF SENSEI'S STILL AT HOME, I'LL TRY TO TAG ALONG.
SENSE.,
WAIT...
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
HE'S FAST!
RUSTLE

SEN...
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
DID I LOSE SIGHT OF HIM?
DARN.
A MANSION. . . IN A PLACE LIKE THIS?
STEP
MAYBE I SHOULD CHECK AROUND THE BACK..
I THOUGHT SENSEI CAME IN HERE, BUT...
IT SEEMS DEGERTED

HMM?
ROLL
PITT
THIS STONE LOOKS A LITTLE LIKE NYANKO-SENSEI...
GLITTERING
TAP
TAP
TAP
SENSEI...
PITTER
PATTER
SENSEI?
HEY, YOU! CAN'T JUST GO IN WHAT IF IT CRUMBLES DOWN? THAT'D BE BAD...
TAP
TAP
SHOCK
PITTER
PATTER

CLATTER
CLATTER
KYAAA
!
I'M COMING IN.
ARE YOU OKAY?! IS SOMEBODY HERE?!
.....
AHHHH!
CLATTER
GASP

IT LOOKED LIKE THE MIDDLE CLASS YOUKAI
THAT SHADOW
BAM
GASP
SOME-THING REALLY IS HAPPENING HERE ISN'T IT?
THEN SENSEI'S HERE TOO?
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
PAT
AN AYAKASHI?
A HUMAN?
.....
IT'S COVERED IN WOUNDS -

*T/N: IN THE JAPANESE VERSION OF HIDE AND SEEK, THE ONE SEEKING IS CALLED THE "DEMON"
GASP
THEN, I AM *IT NOW.
AHH, YOU CAUGHT ME
SHAKY
NOW, HIDE YOUR-SELF.
BO-OM
!

IT'S GONE.
!
HEY, WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?!
WHERE DID IT .
I THOUGHT IT WAS QUITE QUIET, BUT THE PRESENCES OF AYAKASHI HAVE SUDDENLY STARTED TO MOVE ABOUT.
THERE'RE A LOT OF THERE
CHATTER
AHAHA
KYAHAHA
GYAHAHA
AH!
SLIDE
OPEN
SIGH
IF NO HUMAN HAS WANDERED IN, IT WOULD BE POINTLESS TO STAY LONGER.
I SHOULD LEAVE BE-FORE I MEET ANYTHING WEIRDER

HUH.
HINOE?
Na-
Natsu-
me.
What are you doing in a place like this?
Here we go
Are you partici-pating by any chance? You're good. I might fall for you again.
But it's dangerous for humans. Come here.
PARTICI-PATING? NO, I WAS SEAR-CHING FOR SENSE WHEN I HEARD A SCREAM...
PULL
ANYWAYS, COME HERE. LET'S HURRY UP AND LEAVE THIS PLACE.
SWOOSH
AHH, YOU'RE A LIFESAVER, HINOE. THANK YOU.

YOU'RE LATE, HINOE.
OH, NASUME-SAMA.
THE PIG MADARA-SAMA? I DON'T KNOW AND WHAT'S THIS MANSION YOU SPEAK OF?
AHH, YOU SEE .
WHERE'S NYANKO-SENSEI? IS HE NOT WITH YOU?
HUH? THE MIDDLE CLASS YOUKAI.. SO THAT REALLY WAS ANOTHER AYAKASHI...

..RECREATIONAL PAVILION?
YES, THE HOUSE BELONGS TO YUUZURU-SAMA, THE MASTER OF THE VALLEY NEAR MISUMIDAKE.
HE'S A WHIMSICAL PERSON WHO SOMETIMES GATHERS THE AYAKASHI TO PLAY A GAME IN WHICH HE BETS HIS EMPIRE
WELL, HE'S VERY STRONG, SO IN THE END, HE WINS EVERY TIME

THEN THE PERSON BEFORE WAS. .
AHH, THEY SHOULD BE IN THE MIDDLE OF THEIR GAME AROUND THIS TIME IT'LL LAST FOR THREE MORE DAYS.
SO THE PRESENCES I FELT IN THE MANSION WERE THE COMPETING AYAKASHI?
I THOUGHT FOR CERTAIN NATSUME HAD FINALLY DECIDED TO TAKE OVER THE HEGEMONY, STARTING FROM THE MISUMI AREA, AND BEGIN TO SPREAD HIS INFLUENCE.
Even though he's a bean sprout he's flourishing.
OOH! ARE YOU FINALLY RAISING YOUR TROOPS, NATSUME-SAMA?
WILL YOU HANG YUUZURU-SAMA?
That would be a dream.
NO!

OH BOY, ISN'T THAT IF YOU'RE TROUBLE- NOT INTER- SOME? ESTED, THEN YOU SHOULD STAY AWAY.
YEAH.
HAHA. IF A GUY LIKE THAT HAD THE BOOK OF FRIENDS, I WOULDN'T TRUST HIM EVEN IF HE SAID, 'I WON'T USE IT.'
YOU CAN'T RELY ON THE THIS IS WHITE MOCHI A METHOD CAT DOLL. TO CLEANLY SEIZE ALL THE AYAKASHI OF THE AREA.
GOOD NIGHT, TAKASHI- KUN.
GOOD NIGHT.
HAA.
RUB RUB
I WANTED TO SHOW THIS TO HIM.
SENSEI STILL HASN'T COME HOME, HUH?
HE WOULDN'T TAKE PART IN THE GAME AT THE RECREATIONAL PAVILION, WOULD HE...
I'LL CROSS-EXAMINE HIM WHEN HE COMES BACK

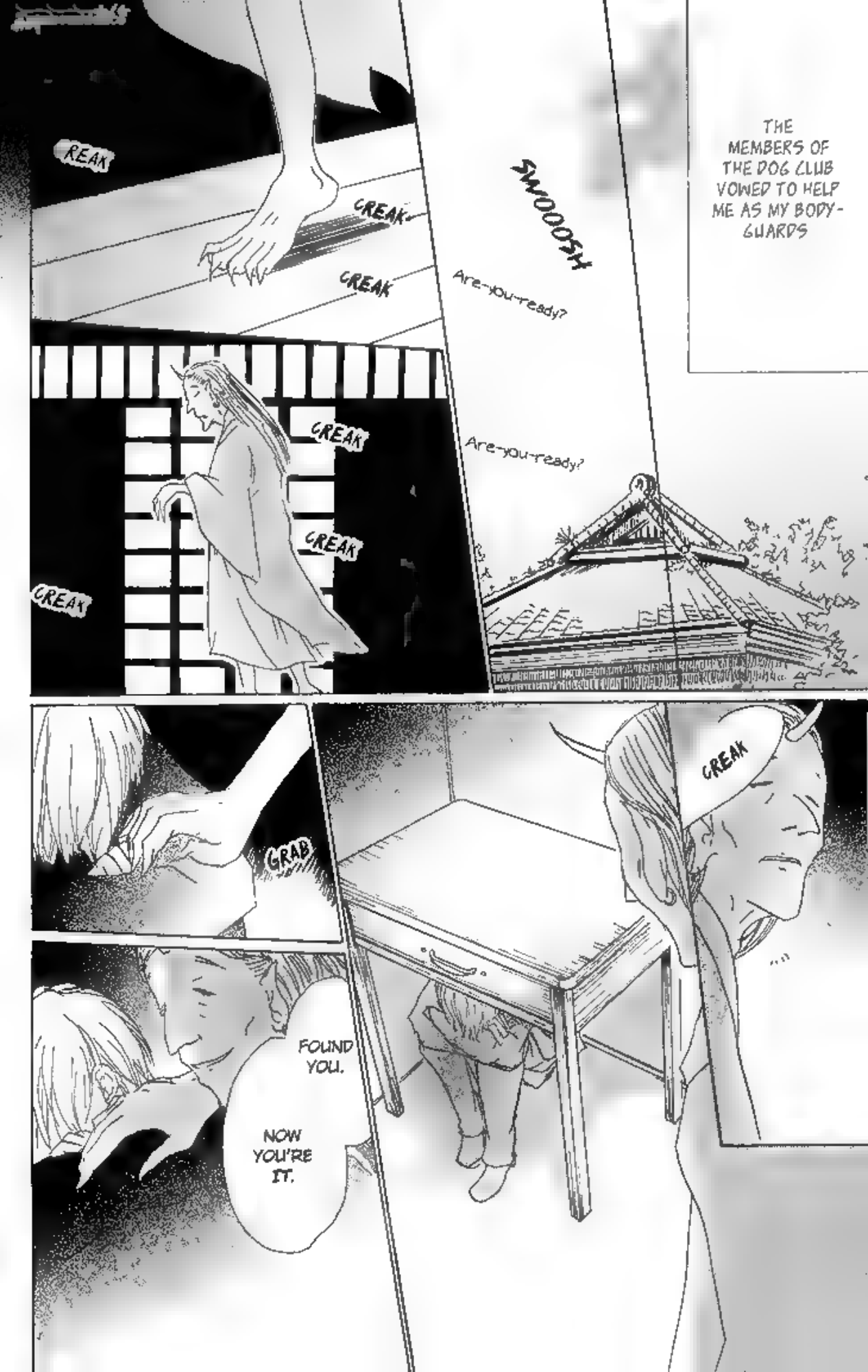
Transcendence
ARE YOU READY?
SHOCK
THE RE-CREATIONAL PAVILION?!
THIS IS. .!!!
It will find you.
I-IT? WHAT... HIDE?
ARE YOU READY?
!
SHOCK
Be quiet! You should hurry up and hide yourself as well!
Wah?!
Hey.
NO, THIS HAS TO BE A DREAM.

ARE YOU READY?
THE GAME THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT WAS HIDE AND SEEK
I THINK THIS IS THE GAME, 'HIDE AND SEEK'
SLAM
PHEW
I'LL STAY IN THIS CLOSET UNTIL I WAKE UP...
HIDES
ALL READY.
RATTLE
NEARER
NEARER
NEARER
NEARER
GASP
Ugh!!!
THERE WAS ALREADY SOMEONE HERE!!!
SHOCK
UH!!!

Uwaa aaaah!!!
JUMPS
I'M SORRY. I WAS HALF ASLEEP
TA-TAKASH-KUN?! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
THAT WAS CLOSE
THIS SHOULD HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH ME
This will be of the next text
WELL THAT WAS JUST A DREAM.
IT HAD ALMOST FOUND ME .
MILE OFF
Hey, the new It is coming. You should quickly hide too, lad.
RUN
RUN
THE RECREATIONAL PAVILION?!
RUN
EEP
EEK
RUN
UNLOCK

THIS IS BAD.
DO I GET BROUGHT BACK WHEN I FALL ASLEEP?!
Are-you-ready?
Waah
Kyah
...THAT'S HOW IT IS
THAT MEANS... YOU WERE CONSIDERED A PARTICIPANT.
WELL, YOU SOME-HOW GOT INVOLVED.
THAT CAN'T BE! ANYWAYS, I WASN'T EVEN IT AT THAT TIME.
NO WAY!
MY BODY WON'T LAST FOR TWO MORE DAYS LIKE THIS.
THEN LET'S PREPARE TO TAKE THE HEGE-MONY!!!
IN HIDE AND SEEK, YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO WIN IF YOU CAN HIDE YOURSELF FROM THE IT PERSON...
AND THE ONE WHO BECOMES IT THE FEWEST TIMES WITHIN THE TIME LIMIT WINS. . OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
THAT MEANS, IF I DON'T WANT TO WIN, IT SHOULDN'T BE A PROB-LEM IF I'M FOUND OR BECOME IT.
BUT IT'LL BE HARSH BEING IN THAT KIND OF SITUA-TION WHERE I CAN'T SLEEP FOR TWO DAYS I WANT TO DISCUSS THIS WITH SENSE, BUT HE STILL HASN'T COME HOME.

SHING
MISUZU!
HO HO, THAT'S INTERESTING.
THEN, INSTEAD OF [illegible] MOCHI, WE SHALL BE YOUR BODYGUARDS.
WELL THEN...
SO IT'S OKAY TO SNEAK A VISIT TO YOUR BEDROOM AT NIGHT?
HO HO, THAT MEANS NATSUME-SAMA IS FREE RIGHT NOW
SHING
SHING
WELL, IT DOESN'T MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE WHETHER YOUR DRUNKARD OF A BODYGUARD IS THERE OR NOT, RIGHT?
WE SHALL SHOW NATSUME-DONO THAT THERE ARE MORE FITTING BEINGS FOR HIM THAN THAT BOWLING BALL.
OOH, GOOD IDEA!
EXCELLENT.
WITH THIS, WE WILL BE ABLE TO DECIDE TO WHOM NATSUME WITHOUT FAIL.
NOW THAT THAT'S DECIDED, LET'S DRINK!
Yaaaa!
OKAY, NATSUME-SAMA, PLEASE POUR THE ALCOHOL FOR US.
YOU GUYS! CUT IT OUT ALREADY!
AND THUS,


CREAK
CREAK
CREAK
CREAK
CREAK
CREAK
SWOOOSH
Are-you-ready?
Are-you-ready?
THE MEMBERS OF THE DOG CLUB VOWED TO HELP ME AS MY BODY-GUARDS
GRAB
FOUND YOU.
NOW YOU'RE IT.
CREAK

'YUUZURU-DONO IS WHIMS.CAL, BUT ALSO UNDER-STANDING
'GO TO THE MANS.ON AND SEARCH FOR THE MASTER WHILE PARTICIPATING IN THE GAME ASK.NG HIM PER-SONALLY SHOULD BE THE FASTEST WAY TO LEAVE THE GAME'
AWW, YOU FOUND ME.
'IT SHOULD BE MORE CONVEN-.ENT TO MOVE AROUND AS IT'
'WE WILL SECRETLY SEARCH FOR YUUZURU AS WELL WHILE YOU ARE IT'
I AM IT NEXT?
YES, WHOEVER IS FOUND AND TAPPED BY IT MUST DECLARE THE TRANSFER IN A LOUD VOICE...
WHILE ASKING, 'ARE YOU READY?' AND COUNTING UNTIL ONE HUN-DRED BEFORE STARTING THE SEARCH
.....

I SEE, IT'S GENERALLY THE SAME AS THE HUMAN VERSION.
HMM?
AH NOTHING. SAY, WHAT IS THIS YUUZURU-SAMA LIKE?
UM, HE'S BOLD YET LANKY.
MORE SO THAN YOU.
MORE THAN ME?!

SO, HE REALLY DOES LOOK LIKE THIS?
OOH, PRECISELY.
THEN CHOBI'S INFORMATION WAS CORRECT...

THIS IS PROBABLY THE AYAKASHI I TOUCHED IN THE MANSION BEFORE .
SIGH
OKAY, I UNDERSTOOD.
WELL, THEN.
IT HAS CHANGED. I AM IT NOW

RUN
WHISPER
WHISPER
MUTTER
No, I'll stay here...
Ooh, it has changed.
Sh-shall we move?
WHISPER
MUTTER
.....
SNEAK
RUSTLE
Na-tsume-sama,
we're over here.
SHALL WE SPLIT UP?
AHH
MISUZU-SAMA CAN'T ENTER THE MANSION SO THAT'S OUT OF QUESTION. NOW THEN, WE WILL GO WITH NATSUME-SAMA.
SHUT UP, PERVERT. I, MISUZU, AM AN APPROPRIATE CHOICE FOR NATSUME-DONO.
YOU GUYS CHECK THE SECOND FLOOR. NA-TSUME COMES WITH ME.

GLOMP
GLOMP
GLOMP
OHOHOHO
WHAT ABOUT CHOBI?
I WILL DO NOTHING BUT WATCH FROM UP HERE.
AWW, THAT'S TOO BAD, BUT SO COOL...!
I'D LIKE TO BE WITH CHOBI...
HEY, NATSUME, DON'T BE SO COLD.
WAH!
NOW, NOW, NATSUME-SAMA. LET'S DRINK A LITTLE AND EXPLORE TOGETHER...
HOW TROUBLE-SOME. LET'S CRUSH THIS MANSION AND FORCE HIM OUT.
UH...
TSK...
SHRIEK
GLARE
DISPERSE!!!
SHRIEK
SHRIEK
TIRED
SIGH
I WAS THE ONE WHO GOT THEM TO HELP... I'D BETTER APOLOGIZE LATER...

NOW I CAN SEE WHAT SENSEI'S GOOD QUALITIES WERE
HE'S A DRUNKARD, BUT AT LEAST HE'S COMPACT!!!
This is heaven if you have a cushion
FUFU.
SHOCK
IN THIS ROOM
I'M SORRY, I WANDERED INTO YOUR PRECIOUS GAME WITHOUT KNOWING.
YUUZURU-SAMA... RIGHT?

FUFUFU
SHOCK
I CAME TO ASK FOR YOUR PERMISSION TO LEAVE.
PARTICIPATING AS A HUMAN IS WAY TOO DIFFICULT.
WHERE IS HE?
THE VOICE IS COMING FROM THIS ROOM, THERE'S NO MISTAKING IT.
BELOW THE TATAMI?
THE CLOSET?
THE CEILING?
THE DESK?
FUFU
FUFU
FUFUFU
....

FWISH
YUU-ZURU-SAMA, PLEASE LET ME LEAVE.
GLARE
I BEG OF YOU.
WON'T YOU PLAY WITH ME?
NO...
I HAVE TO GO BACK.
DON'T YOU WANT THE HEGE-MONY?
NO.

RUN
NATSUME?
RUN
NATSUME-SAMA
AH!
I SEE. NOW THAT I HAVE A CLOSER LOOK, THERE ARE DARK CIRCLES AROUND YOUR EYES.
I SUPPOSE I REALLY CAN'T PLAY WITH HUMANS.
VERY WELL. YOU MAY LEAVE
NOW, TOUCH ME ONCE SO THAT I'LL BECOME IT.

THUS,
WITH THE DOG CLUB'S COOPERATION,
WAAH, STOP THAT.
BANZAI
BANZAI
HUMAN CHILD WHO LOOKED PITIFULLY ON MY WOUNDS
SWOOSH
FUFU.
EVEN IF IT WAS JUST FOR FUN, I THOUGHT I WOULD BRING YOUR FRIENDS IN..

THE HIDE AND SEEK INCIDENT AT THE RECREATIONAL PAVILION WAS SETTLED
YOU DID IT ALMOST ALL BY YOURSELF.
Thank you
TIRED
See you, Natsume-
Bye-bye Natsume sama-
Stoooop
Kyaa
Kyaa
FUWAH.
FALL
POOF
NOW I CAN FINALLY SLEEP...
NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT THE ROOM IS QUIET.
ARE YOU STILL NOT HOME?
SENSEI?
RUSTLE
I THOUGHT HE WOULD DEFINITELY TAKE PART IN THE GAME AT THE RECREATIONAL PAVILION
I STILL HAVEN'T SHOWED HIM THE STONE THAT LOOKS SO MUCH LIKE HIM...

I HOPE HE COMES HOME SOON
AND STARTS ONE OF H.S RANTS
I'M-BACK~
RATTLE
NO WAY! IT COULDN'T BE THAT SENSE! WAS CURSED OR SOMETHING AND TURNED INTO THIS STONE...
SHOCK
JUMPS
AHH, THAT WAS SO MUCH FUN! I'M IN A SUPER ☆ GOOD ☆ MOOD.
SHOCK
WAAAAAH! SENSE!?!
SOOO DELICIOUS!!!
Now my cushion, my cushion
BUT... DIDN'T YOU ENTER THE RECREATIONAL PAVILION?
THERE'S A SMALL POND AT SHINOMIYA POND WHICH GUSHES OUT SAKE FOR ME TO SCOOP UP AND DRINK WITH MY SAKE CUP. IT WAS A SERIOUS DRINKING PARTY!
WHERE? I TOLD YOU, THE PARTY.
SE-SENSE!! WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?!

AH!
THROW AWAY
RATTLE
GASP
WHAAAH
GOING THROUGH THERE IS A SHORTCUT.
DID YOU LOOK AFTER THE HOUSE PROPERLY? . .HUH? WHAT'S WITH THIS STONE...
SENSEI, YOU SLEEP TOO!!!
WHAT DID YOU SAY?! WHAT DID YOU THROW AWAY JUST NOW?!
I'M SLEEPING NOW!!!
STUPID BODY-GUARD!
HEY, DON'T BE CHEEKY!
I'M GOING TO FIND IT TOMORROW!

Credits

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Proofreader: Sorauya

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SPECIAL 15. PART 1
UNDISTORTED WORLD

SHULI-ICHI-SAN.
YOUNG MASTER SHULI-ICHI.
OH DEAR, WHERE HAS HE..
AH, YOUNG MASTER SHULIICH..
PICKS UP
...
-SAN.
IT HAPPENED DURING MY SECOND YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL.

SAY, WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN...
HMM? WHAT IS IT?
THROW AWAY
RAWR
GYAH
SNAKE
A LARGE INSECT WAS THERE, DIDN'T YOU NOTICE?
SINCE I WAS YOUNG, I'VE SEEN THINGS THAT OTHERS COULDN'T
IN THE OLD DAYS THERE WERE MANY EXORCISTS HOWEVER THE ONES WHO COULD SEE DIED OUT AND THE BUSINESS CEASED
WHEN THE PEOPLE AROUND ME COMPLAINED ABOUT THAT, MY GRANDFATHER AND FATHER WERE EXASPERATED WHILE MY MOTHER SHOWED A SAD EXPRESSION

OH, WERE YOU AT THE WAREHOUSE AGAIN? YOU'LL BE SCOLDED BY YOUR FATHER AGAIN, YOU KNOW
SUMI-SAN, DID YOU WANT SOME-THING?
HUH
AS IF I CARE ABOUT THAT

AN ASH-HOUSE
DA-DUMP
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE SEEN THIS ONE WHAT DOES SHE WANT HERE?
DA-DUMP
YES, A GUEST CAME TO SEE EIJI-SAMA
A GUEST FOR GRAND-FATHER?
AND THEY SEEMED TO HAVE AN ARGUMENT JUST NOW
BANG
YES, LEAVE! WE'VE QUIT THIS BUSI-NESS
THAT'S ENOUGH, EXCUSE ME
SUMI-SAN, QUICKLY RETURN TO
UNDER-STOOD I'LL GO AND TAKE A LOOK

I'VE SAID IT SEVERAL TIMES WE WON'T GO TO THE MEETINGS, AND WE WILL NO LONGER HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH EXORCISTS...
DON'T COME AGAIN!
..WE'RE GOING HOME.
THREE DAYS FROM NOW, 8PM AT ISHIZUKI VALLEY.
IF YOU CAN SEE, YOU WILL IMMEDIATELY KNOW WHERE THE ASSEMBLY HALL IS.
A MEETING...?
THAT PERSON COULD HE BE AN EXORCIST?

THIS IS AN EXORCIST
BA-DUMP
BA-DUMP
THE MEET-ING
THERE'LL BE MEET PEOPLE LIKE THIS?
BA-DUMP
BA-DUMP
PEOPLE WHO SEE WHAT-I SEE
THUD
TCH, OUCH.
HEY YOU, DON'T SPACE OUT.
YOU BUMPED INTO ME WITHOUT APOLOGIZ-ING, SECOND YEAR.
SORRY.
HAH? WHAT'S WITH THOSE EYES.
LEAVE IT. IT WAS PARTLY YOUR...

A PERFECT GUY LIKE HIM PROBABLY LOOKS DOWN ON THE PEOPLE AROUND HIM AND DOESN'T WANT TO TALK TO THEM.
BUT HE'S UNPLEASANT WHEN YOU TALK TO HIM. HE SEEMS PRETTY HARD TO APPROACH.
YEAH, HE HAS GOOD LOOKS AND GOOD GRADES TOO.
TCH.
I THINK HE'S THAT NATORI GUY THE GIRLS WERE MAKING A FUSS ABOUT
I DIDN'T INTEND TO LOOK DOWN ON PEOPLE OR ANYTHING
TOMORROW AT 8 PM
COME OUT INEVITABLY UNPLEASANT

会場
*SIGN: ASSEMBLY HALL
北口
*SIGN: NORTH ENTRANCE
会場
*SIGN: ASSEMBLY HALL
YOU'LL KNOW IF YOU CAN SEE, HUH?
HEY, BOY.

I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU AROUND BEFORE. WHO INVITED YOU?
IF YOU DON'T ANSWER..
I'LL EAT YOU RIGHT HERE.
STOP IT.
HE'S WITH ME.
MY APOLOGIES.

THANK YOU. YOU CAN SEE THEM TOO?
YES.
I HEARD A MEETING OF EXORCISTS WOULD BE HELD HERE, SO. .
WHAT IS A STUDENT DOING HERE?
FUFU, I COULD ASK YOU THE SAME WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
I'M IN TENTH GRADE YOU?
I'M IN ELEV-ENTH.
MY NAME IS NATORI, NATORI SHUUICHI. I CAME BECAUSE I WANT TO LEARN ABOUT AYAKASHI.
AND YOU?
HMMM, NATORI?
YOU CAN CALL ME SEIJI, SHUUICHI-SAN
YOU SEE,

I CAME HERE IN SEARCH OF SOME-THING I COULD USE.
SHUU-ICHI-SAN, LOOK.. ON TOP OF THAT TREE.
DO YOU SEE THE KIMONO THAT'S STUCK THERE?
WHAT COLOR IS IT?
A DEEP RED.

HEY!
SHOCK
WHAT?
HMMM.
RUSTLE
SEIJI-KUN, I TOLD YOU, THIS ISN'T A PLACE KIDS SHOULD BE.
TAKU-MA-SAN, I WAS OR-DERED BY THE CLAN THIS TIME AS WELL.
MATO-BA-SAN DID THAT AGAIN...
HMM? WHO'S HE? A FRIEND?
NO, BUT HE'S NOT BAD.

BYE.
WELL, I'M OFF. NANASE-SAN IS WAITING.
AH, HEY! DON'T FIGHT!!!
WHAT?! WHAT DO YOU MEAN NOT BAD?!
HE'S THE SON OF THE MATOBA CLAN.
...WHAT'S WITH HIM?
HUNH!
THEY WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR ROUNDING UP THE ELEVEN BIG EXORCIST CLANS.
THE MATOBA CLAN IS A FAMILY OF EXORCISTS RENOWNED TO BE OF TOP CLASS IN STATUS AND ABILITY.
THE MATOBA CLAN, YOU SAY?
MATOBA
I'VE SEEN THAT SOMEWHERE BEFOR
GASP

AND WHO ARE YOU?
THAT GUY...
WAS ONE OF THE MATOBA CLAN
AH... MY NAME IS NATORI. NATORI SHUU-ICHI...
EH?!
YOU MEAN FROM THE NATORI?!
SOME-HOW,
YEAH.
IT SEEMS THE NAME NATORI IS FAMOUS AMONG EXOR-CISTS
WHISPER
OOH, HE SMELLS EXACTLY LIKE HE HAS THE BLOOD OF THE NATORI.
HEY, DOESN'T HE LOOK LIKE A NATORI?
WHISPER
WHISPER
WHISPER
WHISPER
AND NOT IN A GOOD WAY
WHISPER
SNICKER
YES, YES.
THEY WERE A COWARDLY FAMILY THAT QUICKLY QUIT AND RAN AWAY
THEY USED TO BE A FAMOUS FAMILY, BUT THEY MISERABLY DISCONTINUED THE BUSINESS WHEN THEY WERE NO LONGER BLESSED WITH PEOPLE WHO COULD SEE.
SNICKER
SNICKER
WHISPER

I SEE...
THE EXORCIST WHO APPEARED AT YOUR HOUSE WAS PROBABLY AMASAKI-SAN.
THAT FAMILY OWES A GREAT DEAL TO THE NATOR CLAN SO HE PROBABLY WISHED FOR A COMEBACK...
WHISPER
WHISPER
WHISPER
. ....
IT'S QUITE NOISY HERE. SHALL WE GO OUTSIDE?
NO, TO THINK, THERE ARE SO MANY PEOPLE WHO CAN SEE...
HAHA, THERE ARE A LOT OF AYAKASHI MIXED AMONG THEM, AND NOT ALL EXORCISTS ARE ABLE TO SEE.
THERE WAS A KIMONO STUCK OUTSIDE, RIGHT? IT SEEMS TO LOOK DIFFERENTLY TO DIFFERENT PEOPLE.
HUH?
IT COULD LOOK LIKE A PIECE OF NORMAL WHITE CLOTH, OR A PALE BLUE SHIMMERING KIMONO..
WHAT IS ITS REAL COLOR?
FOR ME, IT LOOKS RED.
FOR ME IT'S RED TOO, BUT QUITE DARK.

I SEE, NOT BAD THEN.
HUH?
HAHA, NO, IT MEANS YOU'RE PRETTY POWERFUL.
THE ONES WHO SEE A REDDISH HUE HAVE PRETTY STRONG YOUKAI POWERS. FOR ME...IT'S MORE ORANGE.
HOWEVER, IT IS RUMORED THAT...
TRULY POWERFUL PEOPLE CAN SEE THE PATTERN OF A BEAUTIFUL YELLOW CHRYSANTHEMUM,
OR A LARGE BLOSSOMING CHINESE PEONY
THE ONE FROM BEFORE SEJI-KUN, IS ONE OF THOSE RARE PEOPLE WHO CAN SEE THE PATTERN.
SURELY, HE WILL HAVE A PROMISING FUTURE AS AN EXORCIST.
.. ..
THAT GUY..
HE WAS TESTING ME
GENGI
HOWEVER, JUST BECAUSE YOU CAN SEE,
DOESN'T NECESSARILY MEAN YOU'RE CUT OUT TO BE AN EXORCIST.

I MIGHT BE BEING CONCEITED, BUT...
I WANT TO PROTECT THEM IF I CAN...
PROTECT THEM FROM THESE UNCERTAIN SHADOWS CALLED AYAKASHI.
YOU SEE,
MY GLASSES ARE FOR SHOW SO I'M NO COMPARISON, BUT...
IF YOU LOOK THROUGH A PIECE OF GLASS, YOU CAN SEE AYAKASHI A LITTLE BETTER.
I WANT TO EXORCISE THE FEARS...
OF THE PEOPLE WHO ARE AFRAID.
AS AN EXORCIST, I'M SURE I CAN DO THAT.

WHERE IS HE? IT SEEMS A NATOR. HAS COME!
UHTTER
UHTTER
HMM?
UHTTER
OOH, THERE, THERE.
THAT'S RUDE, HE IS...
UHUHUH
UHUHUH
OH, TAKUMA. WHO IS THIS YOUNG MAN?
YOUR PUPIL? HE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE A FAMILIAR.
NO, I WANT TO STAY A LITTLE LONGER..
SORRY, LET'S LEAVE.
SHOCK
SNAKE
YOU...
...THAT IS?

TURN
YOU SHOULD NOT TOUCH IT.
IF... IT'S TRANS-MITTA-BLE...
COULD THIS BE SOME KIND OF CURSE...
YOU ARE KIND HEARTED.
...NO, I'M JUST UNEASY.
WHAT'S NORMAL... AND WHAT'S NOT...
I... THERE'S SO MUCH I DON'T KNOW...
I WANT TO KNOW HOW I SHOULD BE.

HE UNDERSTANDS WHAT I'M SAYING.
AHH
YES...
...I SEE.
UNDER-STOOD?!
I'LL GIVE YOU MY BUSINESS CARD SO COME TO ME IF YOU'RE IN TROUBLE.
LIKE I SAID, KIDS SHOULD NOT BE HERE!
CREAK
CAN I COME AGAIN?
THANK YOU VERY MUCH. SORRY I MADE YOU ACCOM-PANY ME.

TAKU-MA-SAN CHIDED ME,
BUT SOME-T.MES, I ATTENDED THOSE MEET NGS SECRETLY
I LEARNED MANY TH NGS THERE
HOW TO HANDLE AYAKASH., HOW TO SEAL THEM
AS WE.. AS RUMORS ABOUT AYAKASH AND EXOR-CISTS
AS A.WAYS, MY EER.E B RTHMARK MOVED AROUND
THE CRIT.C SM AGA.NST THE FALLEN NATOR. CLAN WAS STRONG,
BUT AT LEAST IT WAS T. PEOPLE W

SWOOSH
I DIDN'T NEED TO TELL LIES
I MAY EVENTUALLY LEARN A METHOD TO GET RID OF THIS GUY.
IF I GO THERE REGULARLY,
MAYBE I'LL BE ABLE TO TREAT THE PEOPLE AROUND ME MORE GENTLY
IF I GET R.D OF THIS, MY IRRITAT.ON WILL FADE AND
FOR EXAMPLE
EVEN MY FAMILY SOMEDAY

ONE DAY, I'LL BE A GENTLE PERSON .
SWOOSH
HOW FRIGHTENING. WE'D BETTER NOT GO TOO CLOSE TO THAT AREA FOR A WHILE.
RIGHT.
IT SEEMS TO ATTACK PEOPLE WHO SMELL LIKE EXORCISTS.
DIDN'T YOU KNOW? A HUGE TRI-HORNED AYAKASHI APPEARED AROUND THE UMAARAI MOUND.
OH, THE YOUNG NATOR. BOY CAME AGAIN.
HUH? TAKUMA-SAN GOT INJURED?

HOW STUPID. IF YOU DON'T WANT THAT TO HAPPEN, THEN HURRY UP AND EXORCISE IT ALREADY
....
WHISPER
THAT NATOR. GUY CAME AGAIN.
WHISPER
WHISPER
HE DOESN'T INTEND TO STEAL ALL OUR WORK NOW, DOES HE?
.... AN AYAKASH. THAT ATTACKS EXORCISTS
AHO.S. THE COWARD NOW?
DOES HE INTEND TO SKIP DINNER AGAIN?
WHAT IS SHUUICHI DOING?
FOR ME TO GAIN THE APPROVAL OF THE EXOR "CISTS?
WOULD TAKUMA-SAN AND THE OTHERS APPROVE OF ME?
COULD IT EVEN BE POSSIBLE..

HE SEEMS TO BE BUSY STUDYING HE'S LOCKED HIMSELF INSIDE THE WAREHOUSE
..HIS ROOM APPEARS TO BE RESEARCHING SOMETHING
HMPH. IF HE HAS TO GO SO FAR AS TO CUT OUT MEALS TO SHOW RESULTS...
THEN HE'S ONLY AT THAT LEVEL AFTER ALL.
HE BLURTS OUT WEIRD THINGS TO SCARE OFF THE ENTIRE CLAN.
ALL HE CAN DO IS ATTRACT ATTENTION.
I COLLECTED TESTIMONIES AND RUMORS OF ITS ATTACKS
THE LARGE TRI-HORNED AYAKASHI
IT WAS GRADUAL, BUT I LEARNED HOW TO USE SPELLS AND DRAW CIRCLES FOR EXORCISM

I SHOULD GO HOME AND REST FOR TODAY.
...I'M TIRED.
WHEN CHASING AN AYAKASHI,
I'M EXCITED
AHH, BUT...
RUSTLE
CRACK
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
SHOCK

WHOOSH
TRI-HORN.
SHOCK
ACK!!!
THWACK
?!

WOOSH
DAMN YOU...
IT RAN AWAY.
!
WAIT...
THAT AYA-KASHI JUST NOW..
TCH, IT GOT AWAY.
RUSTLE
BA-DUMP
TH.S GUY.

MATOBA SEIJI...
SHUUICHI-SAN, ARE YOU PURSUING THAT ONE TOO?
!
THEN...
WON'T YOU TEAM UP WITH ME?

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夏目友人帳

なつめゆうじんちょう

NATSUME YUUJINCHOU

SPECIAL 15 PART 2
UNDISTORTED WORLD

'SHUICHI SAN, ARE YOU PURSUING THAT ONE TOO?

'WON'T YOU TEAM UP WITH ME?

.....

IF THIS GUY IS THE YOUNG MASTER OF A DISTINGUISHED FAMILY, THEN HE SHOULD BE SURROUNDED BY COLLEAGUES.

WHY IS HE REACHING OUT TO A LOW PROFILE STUDENT LIKE ME...

THE LOOK IN HIS EYES WAS AS IF HE WAS EVALUATING ME FROM ABOVE

'THEN

I...
I WANT TO FIND OUT HOW FAR I CAN GO WITH MY OWN STRENGTH.

I REFUSE!

I DON'T WANT TO BE TEST ED TO SEE F I M USEFUL OR NOT

DON'T LAUGH! ?!

(Eh?)

AHAHA HAHAHA HAHA!!!

BURST OF LAUGHTER

WELL, THINK IT OVER FOR NOW, SHUU-ICHI-SAN.

SHUT UP! I WON'T TEAM UP WITH YOU.

I'LL EVER GE ALONG WITH THAT GUY

I DON'T THINK

PISSED OFF

HAAA

.....

AMASAKI-SAN? CAN I HELP YOU?

shock

CLENCH

.....

SWOOSH

DASH

AH. WAIT...

SAY

GUNJI

EXCUSE ME, THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT

COULD YOU COME WITH ME FOR A BIT?

I SEE

SORRY

RATTLE

SORRY

I'M BUSY

AM I DOING SOMETHING WRONG?

IF THAT'S THE CASE.

I'M GOING LIMP

I FEEL SICK

I'M GOING TO FEEL LIKE A TERRIBLE PERSON

I WANT TO CORRECT IT

THE ONES WHO ACT CORRECTLY

NOW, WHAT SHOULD I DO?

SHOULD I STICK TO THE PLACE WHERE THE AYAKASHI APPEARED YESTERDAY

SURELY WON'T HURT THE PEOPLE AROUND THEM

YOU CAN JUST CALL ME SE-JI.

Uwah! Matoba Seiji.

IT'S REALLY NOT COMING, HUH?

IT'S NOT COMI-NG

ACHOO

I'M JUST ACTING ON MY OWN.

Why are you here? I told you I wouldn't team up with you.

SO I SUPPOSE IT WON'T COME BACK FOR A WHILE.

WELL, THIS IS THE PLACE WHERE IT RECEIVED A COUNTER-ATTACKED.

HUH? SORRY, I JUST VOICED MY OPINIONS.

YOU SHOULD BE PRETTY GOOD EVEN IF YOU JUST MEMO-RIZED SOME CIRCLES AND USED A GOOD SEALING JAR, SHUUICHI-SAN.

YOU, DID YOU COME TO PICK A FIGHT?

HAHA, THAT MIGHT BE TRUE FOR CHEAP TOOLS.

ANY-WAY, YOU HAVE AN AMAZING AMOUNT OF STUFF THERE.

I DON'T KNOW WHICH WILL WORK ON THE AYAKASHI, RIGHT?

I HEARD THE NATOR. FAMILY WAS SKILLFUL IN USING PAPER.

ONES WHO ARE ADEPT AT MANIPULATING PAPER ARE SAID TO BE ON A CLASS WHERE THEY CAN NEGOTIATE WITH THE GODS.

BUT EVEN THOSE PEOPLE FELL... YOU JUST NEVER KNOW WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN.

THE MATOBA CLAN MIGHT NOT ALWAYS BE ON TOP EITHER.

AHAHA, WHO KNOWS

I WON'T LET IT FALL.

THERE IS NO SUCH WEIGHT

THAT'S WHY

THAT MUST BE WHY I CAN SEE THE WORLD SWAYING SO LOOSELY

WELL THEN, LET'S GO.

HMM?

TO TAKUMA-SAN'S PLACE.

MY EXPERIENCE IN EXORCISM IS STILL QUITE SHALLOW.

I WANT TO HEAR WHAT TAKUMA-SAN FELT FROM THE AYAKASH SINCE I HEARD HE WAS ATTACKED.

YOU'RE GOING TO SEE HIM ANYWAY, RIGHT, SHUUICHI-SAN?

GULP

LET'S GO TOMORROW. THE SUN'S ALREADY SETTING AND IT WOULD BE IMPOLITE TO VISIT HIM AT THIS TIME..

LET'S MEET AGAIN TOMORROW.

FINE.

THEN, SEE YOU.

OH, RIGHT.

RECENTLY, THERE'S BEEN SOMETHING WANDERING AROUND YOUR HOUSE

WHAT IS IT?

WHAT?

HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT?

YOU'D INVESTIGATE THE ONE YOU WANTED TO TEAM UP WITH TOO, RIGHT? WELL, I JUST GOT THAT INFORMATION FROM THE MEETING

SEEMS YOU KNOW WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT. THEN I DON'T NEED TO WORRY BYE.

FOR AN INSTANT I FELT LIKE GOING WITH THE FLOW

BUT AS I THOUGHT BEING WITH HIM IS NOT COMFORTABLE

"That family owes a great deal to the factory"

NEVERTHELESS.

WAS THAT REALLY TRUE?

DASH

SHOCK

Hey! What do you want?

IT WAS THE

DASH

Please wait!

What do you want with us... If you're going to do something bad, then...

!

FLUSTERED

Why are you sneaking around?

I SAID THAT, BUT I'M JUST A POWERLESS EXORCIST WHO'S ON THE VERGE OF SHUTTING DOWN BUSINESS. SO I COULDN'T HELP SNEAKING AROUND.

UH, WELL

YOU WANT TO PROTECT US?

I WAS WORRIED ABOUT NATORI-SAN'S HOUSE.

N-NO! I JUST HEARD THERE WAS AN AYAKASHI TARGETING EXORCISTS LATELY SO..

HUH?

牛

SWOOSH

AHAHAHA.

THAT WAS FOR WHEN YOU'RE TROUBLED BY AYAKASHI.

YOU GAVE ME OUR BUSINESS CARD DIDN'T YOU?

I TOLD YOU, THAT'S DANGEROUS

HEY, SHUUICHI-KUN, YOU'RE STILL PRETENDING TO BE AN EXORCIST?

UNDER THE PRETENSE OF BEING PRECAUTIOUS.

WE LISTENED TO TAKUMA-SAN'S STORY, HOPING TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW TO EXORCISE THE AYAKASHI

WHY DON'T YOU GO HOME, SHUUICHI-SAN?

AHH, ALL RIGHT. COME IN.

YOU'!!

THIS AYAKASHI SEEMS TO BE ABLE TO JUDGE WHETHER OR NOT SOMEONE IS AN EXORCIST BY HIS SMELL.

ACCORDING TO MY INVESTIGATION, IT HAS BEEN WITNESSED IN UMA-ARAIZUKA AND AROUND THE WATANOSE AREA.

WE'LL PROBABLY TALK ABOUT IT AT THE NEXT MEETING, SO MAKE SURE NOT TO GO NEAR THAT AREA.

NO, THIS ONE CAN ONLY BE SETTLED THROUGH EXORCISM.

I WONDER, DID IT SEEM TO UNDERSTAND WORDS?

IT SEEMS TO HOLD A GRUDGE AGAINST EXORCISTS IN THAT AREA, BUT CANNOT DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS, AND ATTACKS ALL LIKELY CANDIDATES THAT CROSS ITS PATH.

OKAY

WATANOSE IS AROUND HERE, ISN'T IT?

YEAH.

THE AYAKASHI SEEMS TO HAVE AN ANIMAL-LIKE BUILD, SIMILAR TO A HORSE OR A COW, WHICH MEANS A FIRE OR METAL-TYPE SPELL SHOULD WORK.

. . .

STOP IT WE'RE NOT TEAMING UP, SO HINTS.

HINTS?

AHH, SORRY. THAT INFORMATION WAS JUST SO BASIC...

. . .

THIS GUY

BUT

MAYBE I SHOULD NOT BE SO STUBBORN

It's collapsible.
HMM? AHH, IT'S A BOW.
LOOKS DANGER-OUS. ARE YOU GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT?
WHAT'S THAT?
BECAUSE IF I'M REALLY AIMING FOR THIS PROFESSION, HE IS MY SENPAI
IT SEEMS THAT NORMAL PEOPLE CAN'T SEE THE BOW-STRING
I FAILED LAST TIME,
BUT THIS TIME...
I'LL FINISH IT WITH ONE BLOW
DO YOU LEARN THROUGH SELF-STUDY, SHUUICHI-SAN?
OR DO YOU HAVE A MASTER, MAYBE TAKUMA-SAN?

Mumble

I HAVE A FEELING MY CLAN HAS ITS OWN WAY OF DOING THINGS SO I SELF-STUDY AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.

TAKUMA-SAN IS A NICE PERSON, BUT HE'S NOT THAT WELL VERSED IN TECHNIQUES.

IF YOU'RE GOING TO LEARN, WHY DON'T YOU GET A MORE SKILLFUL...

BAM

What I should learn is... What I want to be!

not the point!

That's...

I'm just a powerless exorcist who's on the verge of shutting down business.

I'm a useless exorcist who's on the verge of shutting down business.

I WANT TO BE...

I...

BUT

BUT

WE PROBABLY

IF YOU DON'T GET STRONGER,

YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO PROTECT ANYTHING, SHUU-ICHI-SAN.

CLINCH

PERSON-
ALITIES
PROBABLY

TOGETH-

3

SEE YA

YOU HELP-
ED ME
A LOT

SIGH

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

A METAL-
TYPE SPELL
I THINK IT
WAS THIS
CIRCLE AND
THAT TALIS-
MAN.

SWOOSH

WHAT? ARE YOU GETTING SCARED?

BUT I'VE HEARD HE'S POWERFUL, RIGHT?

IT'S AROUND HERE! RIGHT? THIS IS A GREAT CHANCE FOR US

RUSTLE

SWITCH

IF WE EXOR-CISE THIS TRI-HORNED AYAKASHI WE'LL BECOME FAMOUS AND MANY PEOPLE WILL BE INVITED TO US

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

RUSTLE...

SHOCK

CLINCH

SWOOSH

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

SMOKE

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

Uwaah...

SCRATCH

THROW

SWOOSH

!

Damn.

FWOOSHSH!

Eek.

Stand back!

FWOOSH

WHH

GIP!!

THE WORDS ON HIS CIRCLE ARE FIRE

WOBBLE

GLANCE

Be gone.

Be gone!

Silver shalt separate thee.

thou needst not heat nor thunder.

To pass this road,

EVIL DEGONE!

BAM!

GASP

FLIP

CRUMBLE

RUSTLE

Over here, Seiji!

WOBBLE

Eeek...

THE BINDING TALISMAN HAS

!

OSH

SWO

!

.....

SPARKLE

Who do you think you are talking to?

PULL

WHOOSH!!

Don't miss.

FLICK

THUD

FWOOOSH

WOOOOOSH

BECAUSE YOUR SPELL WORKED.

STATUSES

ARE THE TWO EXORCISTS FROM BEFORE OKAY?

YEAH, THEY RAN AWAY WHEN I TRIED TALKING TO THEM.

I

I FAILED...

THE ONE WHO FINISHED IT OFF WAS YOU. THIS ACHIEVEMENT IS SOLELY YOURS.

REALLY?

THANK YOU, YOU SAVED ME...

YEAH.

I SEE.

THEN I'LL GRATEFULLY CLAIM THE MERIT

THAT IS, IF YOU CAN'T BECOME STRONGER.

SHUUICHI-SAN,

IMPROVE YOUR LIFE-STYLE.

IT INSTANTLY BECAME KNOWN THAT MATOBA SEIJI SINGLE HANDEDLY DEFEATED THE AYAKASHI THAT WENT AFTER EXORCISTS

WELL MANY ANTICIPATED THAT RESULT FROM THE START

SHUT UP.

SWOOSH

WHISPER

I HEARD THAT THE CURRENT HEIR HAD HIS FACE ATTACKED MERCILESSLY COUNTLESS TIMES.

IS IT REALLY SOMETHING TO BE ENVIOUS OF? I DEFINITELY WOULD NOT WANT MY RIGHT EYE TO BE EATEN.

WHISPER

I'M SO ENVIOUS THAT THE MATOBA ARE SO STABLE.

THE NEXT HEIR OF THE MATOBA FAMILY WILL LIKELY BE SEIJI-KUN.

WHISPER

WHISPER

HIS RIGHT EYE?

I JUST WANT TO,

ABOUT PEOPLE'S CIRCUMSTANCES

BUT

WITHOUT SWAYING MY HEART

BECOME A POWERFUL AND RIGHTEOUS EXORCIST

MY OWNER PASSED AWAY YESTER-DAY...

Sigh

DAMN, I SHOULD NOT BE SPEAKING TO AN AYAKASHI.

THE PROBLEM AYAKASHI HAS ALREADY BEEN TAKEN CARE OF

HUH? ARE YOU BY YOURSELF TODAY?

WE'VE CAUSED YOU SOME TROUBLE.

IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE HE'S LOOKED SO HAPPY.

IT HAD PLAGUED HIM FOR A LONG TIME, BUT IN THE END HE WAS ABLE TO DO WHAT HE WANTED.

FROM AN ILL-NESS.

WILL YOU DO NOW?

WHAT

WHER-
EVER
YOU GO,

WHETHER
I BE A
STRAIGHT
PATH TO
WALK UPON,

OR A
WAY TO
BECOME
GENTLER

WHEN
EVER YOU
TRY,

YOU
MAY
NEVER
FIND
IT.

SWOOSH

EVEN SO

SWOOSH

A PERSON?

ON THE OPPOSITE SHORE

SE JI.

I GUESS HE CAN'T HE SEE MY FACE FROM OVER THERE

SO EVEN HE WILL SOMETIMES JUST STAND THERE

AND WATCH THE RIVER FLOW

AH~

WE'RE NOT TOGETHER

SHOWS HIS USUAL FEAR-

SADLY

I WILL
NEVER BE
ABLE TO SEE
THE SAME
THINGS AS
HIM

Chatter

Chatter

MY, MY, THAT SEEMS DANGEROUS. DON'T OVERDO IT.

HAHA.

WELL, YES.

NATORI, I HEARD YOU EXORCISED A BIG ONE AGAIN.

DID YOU LEARN THROUGH SELF-STUDY?

IF I WALK DOWN THIS PATH SOMEDAY

YOU DON'T NEED TO WORRY. I'LL SHOW YOU IT'LL BE FINE.

WILL I FIND SOMETHING?

WILL I MEET SOMEONE?

WILL I

SWOOSH

EXCUSE ME.

I'M GOING TO GET SOME AIR.

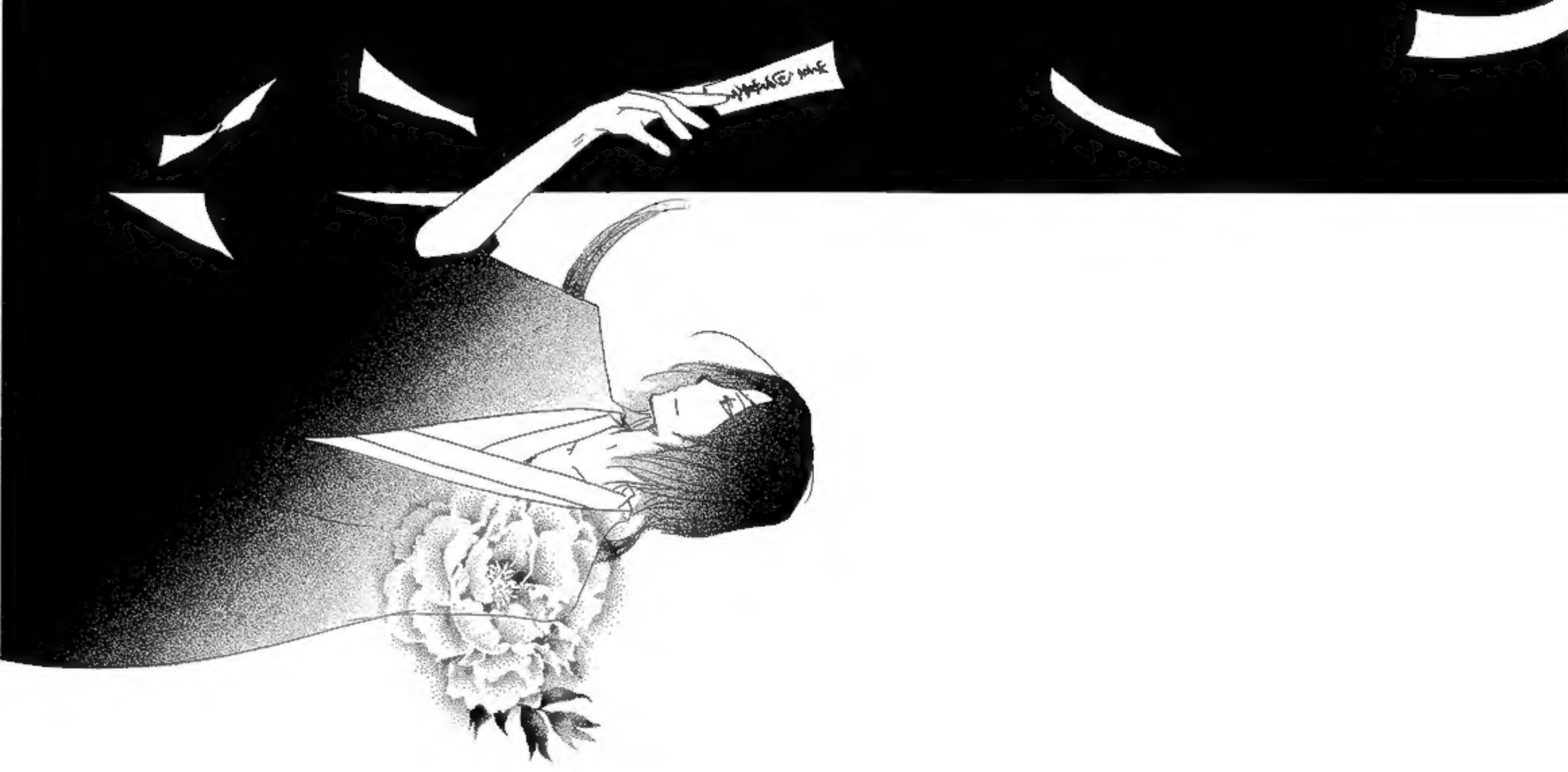
LONG TIME NO SEE SHUU-ICHI-SAN.

OH, IS HE SLEEP-ING?

FUFU

ISN'T IT BECAUSE YOU LOOK THROUGH THESE GLASSES THAT EVERYTHING APPEARS DIS-TORTED?

NATSUME YUUJINCHOU 17 END



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